

REMARKS

Independent Claims 1-7 and 9-27 are presented for consideration, with Claims 1 and 9 being independent.

Editorial changes have been made to the specification and abstract. In amending the abstract, the comments in paragraph 1 (page 2) of the Office Action have been considered.

Applicant notes with appreciation that Claims 8 and 9 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Based on this indication, and in order to expedite prosecution, Claim 1 has been amended to include the features of Claim 8, and Claim 9 has been placed in independent form. Additionally, dependent Claims 16-27, corresponding to Claims 2-7 and 10-15, respectively, have been added.

Claims 1-7 and 13-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Muramoto. In addition, Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over Muramoto in view of Itoh '103, and Claims 11 and 12 are rejected as allegedly being obvious over Muramoto in view of Morita '670. As discussed above, independent Claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 8. These rejections are therefore deemed to be moot and should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application is deemed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested.

Appln. No.: 10/722,444

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

/Scott D. Malpede/

Scott D. Malpede
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 32,533

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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